Project I.D. No. 202

NAME: Kusachi, Masaji DATE OF BIRTH: 1903 PLACE OF BIRTH: Okayama
Age: 75 Sex: M Marital Status: M Education: 8 yrs

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 11/1919 Age: 16 M.S. Y.Y. Port of entry: Seattle, Wa.
Occupation/s: 1. Sales Clerk(Japan) 2. Railroad Worker 3. Farmer 4. Sawmill worker/
Place of residence: 1. Hood River, Oregon 2. _____ 3. Farmer
Religious affiliation: _____
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Portland Assembly Center
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca. & Minidoka, Idaho
Dispensation of property: Land - Leased Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. Kitchen Helper (T.L.) 2. Making Roads (Minidoka)
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: Hood River, Oregon

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: March 1945 Farmer
Address/es: 1. Hood River, Oregon 2. _____
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Buddhist
Activities: 1. Japanese School Treasurer 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 6/9/78 Place: Sacramento, Ca.
Translator: Takako Yoshida
H. TAKARABE

NAME: Masaji Kusachi

BIRTH PLACE: Okayama Ken

DATE OF IMMIGRATION: 1919, 16 years old

OCCUPATION: Farmer, Railroad Worker, and Sawmill Worker

LOCATION OF CAMP: Tule Lake to Minedoca (SIC)

Interview Date: June 9, 1978

Interview Location: Sacramento (Resident of Oregon)

Interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe

Translator: Takako M. Yoshida

Q: You know that Sansei don't know much about the past and Issei experiences, so we are tying to keep record of Issei so that Sansei and Yonsei can read a bout them.

A: Oh, you mean you want to write a book.

Q: Yes. So I'll ask you questions, along the various periods, so please tell me as much as you can remember. Please state your name.

A: Kusachi, Masaji

Q: WHere were you born?

A: In Okayama.

Q: When were you born?

A: 1903. I'm 75 years old now.

Q: What did your father do?

A: He was in this country before I was born. He came back to Japan and again he was back in America. I came here as his yobiyose (summoned one) in 1919. My father was not working very hard when I came here. He was helping my older brother. He was growing strowberries. He bought a piece of land and growing strowberries. However, he went back to Japan three years after I came here.

Q: You said you came here in 1919.

A: Yes. I was 16 years old. I lived with my mother till then. I was working as a sales clerk at the agricultural cooperative association. It was soon after I graduated from Kohto Shogakko. Then I cam over here.

Q: What kind of person was your mother?

A: She was a very strict person, but was very gentle in some way.

Q: Were you scolded by her?

A: Yes, (laugh). She was very strict. I have 4 brothers and sisters. I am the last one. Both of my elder brothers were gone. I still have my older sister in Japan. She must be 80 years old this year. She was farming. My family was farmers. We own a field. We produced enough to eat. We also had peach and others. We had rice paddy. We helped others, too.During the summer time, I used SWAMP peaches and ship them out. I must have been 14 or 15 years old. I just graduated from the school.

Q: How far did you go in your schooling?

A: I went to Jinjo Koto Gakko (8th year). I liked school very much. There were 42 students in my class. I was the 2nd smallest boy in the class. I had good friends. One of them is still alive. Even if I visit Japan, none of my classmates are alive except this one. I do remember

this man who was from my village, but I wouldn't even be able to recognize students from other village. I do remember one woman, but I don't know the rest. There were also those who went to war in the South East Asia and died.

Q: What do you remember from the time when you lived with your mother?

A: Let's see... my mother used to take me to visit a temple, my family belonged to Nichiren Sect.

Q: What kind of games and plays did you do?

A: I used to go fishing with my good friend. We set a trap with a strow and a big bottle. We put some sake lees in the bottle and put in the bottom of the streem. Sake lees got disulved and washed down stream. Haye (a dance) would swim up stream and came into the trap. They would go around to the up stream and come into the bottle. The mouth of the bottle is set in such a way that once they got in, they couldn't get out. We used to do this a lot. We could catch many of them in that manner. We used to set aout 3 traps at a time.

There is a saying chikuba no tomo (a childhood of banboo horse), the time when I played around with my childhood friend was the best time. I used to make a tall bamboo horse. If the other have a 5 ft horse, then I would make a 6 ft horse, and rode around it. We used to play with

it a lot. When a boy steped over a ditch, then I would to the same. I suppose kids now a day wouldn't play with a banboo horse any more, even in Japan. I'm really impressed by the word, "chikuba no tomo".

Q: Did you like any subjects at school?

A: Well, I didn't like those study subjects very well, however I liked to drow pictures.

Q: What kind of job did you do at the Agricultural Cooperative Association?

A: Oh, I was a sales clerk. They sold a lot of things such as groceries, dry goods, tools and others. In the begining I was just a sales clerk, however, soon after that I began to do some wholesale purchasing for the association. I would take an inventory of the store and look over the materials which might be needed. Then I would go to the wholesale store and order those items. I used to go to the town of Okayama which was about 2 to 3 miles away.

The thing which I was afraid of was when we had exceptional sales, Obon (the day of the Feast of Lanterns) and the new year. I was really afraid of those dates. In Japan those days were prime target for burglery. Usually my friend used to come and stay with me. However, he wouldn't come to stay with me on those days.

Once I slept with a wooden sword under my pillow. However, I was never burglerized. I used to take the whole income of the day to the maneger of the association. So I didn't have any cash with me. Even though I didn't have money, some people might think that I have the receipts of the sale. That's why it was very dengerous. Those receipts were very large, becaue most of the time people buy things on credit, but they payed up on these days. So I would say there was somewhere between ¥ 3,000 to ¥ 4,000. There were about 50 families in that village. There was not much cash exchanged on the average day.

There was also a peach cooperative association, too. A broker would bring his cash and leave it with the association. That wasy farmers didn't have to worry about not being paind. They had the cash already. So they sent their peaches to that man. I was also afraid of that day, too. Brokers from Osaka, Kobe and Nagoya used to come and left the cash with us, so it would be over ¥ 3,000 or even ¥ 4,000. They did that so that the brokers can make sure that they got the peaches. In the begining farmers suffered a lot because they didn't get their money when they sent out their peaches. Soon they installed that kind of system.

There were many cases of fraud before that. I still remember one case. A man came from Tsuruga and asked us to send peaches to hem. At that time we had Tenshin

peach, which was pointed at the top and red inside. He wanted to have that peach. So we sent a cargo to him, but we never received the payment. Later on we changed to the cash system. Even if we went to look for him, we wouldn't be able to find him.

Q: Were farmers in your area poor or rich?

A: They were rather well to do, I think. Nowadays they grow hot house grapes, so they are very well to do. However, they do need a big capital to do this. They used to use coal to heat the hot house, but they use oil now, so its really easy to controle heat. However, its more expensive that way. But all of them are doing well with a large set ups. There are quite a few people who groce several million yen a year.

Q: How long did you work there?

A: I worked there for 2 years, when I was 14 and 15 years old.

Q: Have you made any mistake there?

A: No, I don't think so. However, I do remember one thing though many sacks of Fu (a light dry cake made of gluten) were eaten up by mice. It was a very expensive thing. They used to use that for summer cooking. We had bought them from whole sale and hung them from the ceiling. But mice got into that, too. From that time on I became very good at catching mice.

I filled a big jar with water till very close to the top, floated chaff on the surface. So they think its a pile of chaff, but actually its deep water underneath, so they got drowned in it. I was a good method, so I cleaned up all the mice we had in the storeage room. This method didn't need any of my time. There was no smell or anything, so they came in one after another.

Well, I came here when I was 16 years old, but I didn't expect to stay here this long.

Q: What was the reason why you came to this country?

A: Well, I had my father here. He called me to this country.

Q: What did you think of America before you came here?

A: Well, I was coming to a country where I did not know anything about, so I was very uneasy. When I graduated from school, I had to decide whether or not I should continue my schooling or come to America. My father told me to come, so I came.

Q: Did your father tell you anything about America?

A: No, he didn't say anything. Except that it was an unknown contry and I was very curious about it.

Q: Were there any one in your village who came to America?

A: Yes, there were. My cousin came over here ahead of me, too. There were two or three people of my neighborhood who had come ahead of me. One of them was in Salt Lake City.

He had passed away. One of them was in Oregon, but he also passed away. There was one who smaggled in. He got caught and was sent back to Japan. It must have been in 1924 to 1926. There were quite a few people who smaggled in during that period. They came here as seamen , and jusp in Portland River. There were brokers for this, too. There were many smuggling at that time.

You see, they passed the law in 1924 so that Japanese couldn't immigrate any more. So smuggling became very frequent because of curiocity, I think. They had contacted a broker over here, and he would hide him away as soon as he landed. Those brokers were Japanese. They were mostly gambling joint workers. As soon as they got here, they would sent them away as railroad workers, or farm workers.

Q: When you left Japan where did you get on board?

A: Yokohama. I was by myself. I left my mother there. My sister was already married by that time. My older brother was in Japanese Navey. He entered Navery when he was 19 years old. My mother was a very cheerful person. All the villagers liked her, so I don't think she was lonesome. She never came to America.

Q: How was the trip on the boat?

A: There were yong men from Sendai and Kagoshima who stayed with me at an inn called Fukuiya. We were in the same

room and traveled together. However, we had zuzu ben (Tohoku brogue) and Kagoshima ben (Kagoshima direct) were very difficult to understand. So we had a very bad communication problem. I thought, "Even within Japan there are places where spoken words cannot be understood." It was my first experience and felt that Japan was a very large country.

Well, right before we got on board, they discovered that three of us had hookworms. So we had to be hospitalized for a thile. It looked as ifthe hospital room was an attic. We couldn't eat anything and our digestive system was cleaned out. So we were completely exhausted. So we had to wait for the next ship.

There was about 2 weeks wait. It was during August, so three of us went to swiming everyday in Yokohama. As soon as we ate breakfast at the inn, we took an electric car and went to beach. You see, we were just out of our starvation diet and were very hungry. At the beach they used to sell dango (dumpling) on skewer. Each skewer had 4 dango on. Three of us ate all the dango one store had. It was a store mannaged by an old woman. Well, finally we passed phusical and got on the next ship which was Africa Maru.

I didn't ge seasick, so it was Ok on board. It took 14 days to come to Seattle. When we came to Seattle, they discovered that I still had the hookworms. So I was detained in the immigration office again. I was there for three weeks. They examined you only once a week. So I was there for three weeks. It was very hard. I felt like I was placed in a jail. We were fed Chinese food. When we went to eat, they counted the number of those who went. We ate meal and then when we came back, they counted the number again. When we slept, it was like silkworm beds. The day after I failed the examination for the hookworms, they made me take medicine and caster oil. On top of that, I couldn't go to the mess hall.

At that time a friend of mine sprinkled suger on a bread, hid it somewhere and brought it back to me. I also did that for other people, too. You know we were really hungry.

Q: Is that Immigration office on an island?

A: No, it was irght in the middle of Seattle. That old building is still standing there. It turned black though. It had iron bars on the window. It was only for Japanese. But the cook was a Chinese.

Q: Did you feel as if you were in jail?

A: Yes, I did. It was very uncomfortable. When a person was released from confinement, he would buy something and gave it to the fellow detainees, such as candies, or fruits. We were really happy to receive them. So when I got out, I also bought something and gave it to them. You see, there was nothing we could eat except the meal time. There was nothing we could buy either. The food had really strong order. The thing I didn't like most looked like boiled strow. We just couldn't eat it. I still don't know what that was. So the only thing we could eat was a piece of bread sprinkled with suger. Even rice, we ate it raw sometimes, but Chinese rice is very dry and has an odor. We weren't used to it so we couldn't eat it. We ended up eating a lot of bread. I felt as if we were put in a jail for three weeks.

Q: Did you see any graffitte?

A: No, I didn't see any thing like that at all.

Q: Did you remember your father?

A: Yes, I did. You see I had my older brother here, earlier. But I lived with my father for about 12 to 13 years. As soon as I was released from the immigration office, I was taken to Hoodriver . At that time there was no such thing as high way. It was a dirt road. It was in a mountain and I got in there after dark. I was aware of

large trees on both sides of the road, so I was wondering how far I was taken away from the civilization. In the morning I saw fields, so I felt that it was only a country side. It was in the begining of Noveember. I left my home in the end of August, however, I had to stay in Yokohama because of hookworms and also with the same reason in Seattle, so it was in the begining of November when I finally arrived at my destination.

It was the Christmas eve when I saw snow. Next day we found that it snowed about 3 ft. I was really surprised by this. I felt that this was a real snow country. It didn't make any noise and yet it snowed 3 ft. In Okayama you'll never see snow. Sometimes, you'll see snow covering ground, but it seldom happens.

Q: Did you have a light there already?

A: No, we didn't have it then. We used lamps. However, we did have a telephone. Electricity was not available to us till 1923 to 1924. We paid about $120 per family to set up telephone pales. At that time there was no public transportation. There was very few families who had automobiles. Even though you had a car, you couldn't use it in the winter. When we went shoping or post office, we had to ride on a horse. Even horseswouldn't move if it snowed deep enough to touch his belly. Then we had to take bamboo rings which were used to hold Shoyu barrels, put rope around it to make a net and walk with on

them. It's like a snow shoes. There was no ski, then. The snow was very wet, so it wasn't good for ski.

I had to go to a train station to get our mail. There waa about a mile from our house to the station. This is the railroad which was constracted by my father and his friends. It would be about 80 years before.

Q: When did your father come here first?

A: I don't really know. It was before I was born. He was working for a railroad. Our neighbor in the village in Japan was a forman, so he worked under him. He came back here when I was 13 years old. My oldest brother was a bout 14 years older than I, so he was about 30 years old then.

Q: How did you feel when you came to this country?

A: Well, I was shocked by that deep snow. My relative was something to do with hiring railroad workers. He said, "There is a good job for you in SPS. Do you want to go?" So my father and I went to work. At that time it was 50¢ per hour, and if you work 10 hour, then they'll give you $6.00 (for 12 hours). It was a good pay, so we went. We worked for 2 months. However, our forman drunk too much doburoku (raw sake) and became mad. Finally he hung himself and committed suicide. So this railroad gang was broken up. However, we made a quite bit of

money at that time. So my father took that money and went back to Japan. I never saw that money. The only thing is that I got a habit of smoking. My boss used to say that we souldn't be leaning against shavel. It looked very bad.

Well, a friend of mine brought me"Dahm" (Boldaham) BULL DURHAM cigarette. He said, "Even if you are just standing, it would look better if you are trying to make a "Daham" cigarette. At least you look like you are doing something." So that's how I learned to smoke. If you are working for a railroad, you just couldn't be standing ther idlely.

We were young, so I was made to hammer down spikes. I used to miss it and make marks on the rail. At that time Issei were young. Older ones were in their 30's and 40's. I was only 17 years old. Spike hammering was not that easy. It's really hard to hit those spikes. We were to hit it straight or a little bit from inside. But it's really bad to get it right. The hammer was 8 lb. You are to hold the end of its handle and swing it down. Even though I was young, my sholder used to hurt a lot. However, I was feeling Ok next day. They used to make me do that very often, simply because I was still very young. Whenever I cross a railroad track, I still remember that time.

The rails at the curb needed a lot of attension. The top part got thinner, so it needed to be changed quite frequently.

There were ticks, too. Most of the place was a sandy place. When the young leaves began to grow, it was the ticks' season. When we ate lunch, we ate it under the tree. Well, ticks were there waiting for us. So soon we learned to eat lunch under thhot sun. When a tick bit into your flesh, you couldn't pull it out. If you did, then its head would stay in the flesh. Its mouth had pincers to cling to your skin. So if you pull at it, pincers would not let it come out. And once you let that happen it would be very difficult to take it out. Besides, it made you really ichy and swollen. So we had to brush on iodine, then it would come off by itself. So it wouldn't get swollen or ichy. It was the only way to get rid of it. We were really bothered by those ticks.

We used to boil red beans, put suger and put it on bread to eat for lunch. We used to put red beans as thick as bread. This was the usual luch for railroad workers. You might have a hot dog along with it. They brought bread and brans for us. So we could eat as much as we could. It was payed out of our own salary. B efore that they used to eat <u>dangojuru</u> (soup with doumplings). But I

don't know about that, because by the time I came, they had rice (and things were a lot better). They say it was really terrible. By my time they imported food from Japan and we had lot of rice.

Q: There were gambling joints at that time.

A: Yes, there were,all over the place. There were some in Portland. There was one in Seattle, too. The name of the boss was Yanagida in Seattle, and Tozayama in Portland. There were lots of murders in those gambling joints. These bosses were in contact with one another, so even though they committed murders in one place, they would hide the body in another place, so they couldn't do anything about it. The body was taken out of the state, so the authority couldn't do anything about it. I know somebody was killed in Seattle, but this case was not solved.

They used to have a lot of fights in those joints. Those people who worked in a canary in Alaska didn't have jobs during the winter. So they had time to gamble. They made lots of money in summer, so they lived on it and gambled with it. If they run out of money, they would borrow money from those bosses, and continue to eat and gamble. By the time they go to Alaska, they didn't have a penny with them.

They made money in Alaska and pay off thier debts. So they used to say that those who go to Alaska had no brain. They had eaten off their brain first. They were

all single people. There is very few people alive now who went to work in Alaskan Canaries. Those canary workers were the ones who didn't want to work for railroad. So long as they worked for canary, they could gamble every day. When they came back from the work, they didn't work, so they could gamble, too. When their money run out, they borrowed from the bosses (contractors for canary workers). There were many of those people.

There were very few people working in cities, because they didn't understand English. They worked for saw mills, or railroad. These were hard work, so the only straight and deligent people could last in those works. They had set work schedule and definite number of workers, so you couldn't take time off as often as you wanted to. If you take too many days off, then you would befired.

Most of Japanese workers worked for saw mills and rairoads. There were lots of people who worked for the Union Pacific, SPS, Great Northern. There were quite few Japanese people who worked for these campanies. Most of the railroad gangs were Japanese at that time. Most of the section formans from Seattle to Spocane were Japanese and it also was the same from Wisland (?) to Weed. When you enter as a section gang, they'll take you into a strange and unknown places, so naturally you'll save lots of money. Sometimes you would be stationed by a town, however, section

work wasn't bad at all.

Q: I suppose, gamblers lost lots of money.

A: Yes, of course. Gamblers didn't have any money at all. There were those gamblers who had their wives and children in Japan. I used to know a person who owned a restaurant in Chicago. I came to Seattle with him. However, he didn't have a money to go to Seattle. So he had some one in Chicago sent him money. Then, he had to go to a post office to receive it. However, he had to show his identification card. He was such a short tempered one that he told them that he didn't need the money. So they had to sent it back.

I was with him at that time. I said, "What are you going to do?" He said, "I've got an idea. Why don't you come with me tonight." I was wondering what he was going to do. Well, he went to a gambling joint. He asked me to loan him some money. So I just arrived from Japan, so I had $50 with me. I had to come to Hood River, so I needed some money, too. I loaned him about $20.

I went alone with him. He went to a Chinese gambling house. He told me to stay behind him. So I watched him from behind. He played with my money. When he won, he would pass me money little by little. He asked me how

much he made. So I said, "You made about $180." Then he said, "Oh, that's enough." So we came home. There was such a person, too. He game back to me twice as much as I loaned him. Next day he brought a train ticket and went to Chicago.

He lived about 2 and 1/2 miles away from our village in Japan. We hapen to be on the same boat. I was really afraid of gambling then. I havne't done much gambly. They say if you have lots of money infront of you, then you'll lost. You just have to put away the money you won.

At that time it cost over $100 to go to Chicago, twice as much as going to Japan. He had to take a sleeping carriage.

Q: After you worked for railroad for two months, what did you do?

A: After that, I went back to my brother's farm. I also helped my cousin with cherries. He worked for a white farmer. I went there every summer. I learned to drive at that time. I was 23 years old then. You see, my cousin got sick and couldn't go to town to buy food. It was an old Ford truck. I couldn't go into the town because I was afraid. I drove up to the entrance of the town. Then I walked to the store, bought food and then went back to the Truck.

Q: Did you enjoy your job?

A: Yes, I did. You see, I was born a farmer. My relatives grew tomato and other vegitables. So I worked for them for a year. It was very interesting.

Q: Did you have any association with white folks?

A: No, not at all. I had lots of relatives, so I was working for them. I didn't have to have any contact with other people.

Q: Were there many Japanese in Oregon?

A: Yes, there were a quite few of them. There was a sawmill in Hood River and there were about 50 to 60 Japanese people working there. At that time most of the sawmill used Japanese. The only few white people worked as a sawyer or machine operator. The rest of people were Japanese. They worked very hard, so the owner liked to hire them. At that time there was a man, a German by the name of Gunnie, who trusted Japanese very much. A Japanese forman, who came from Tottori Ken, knew everything about the sawmill and moved people very smoothly. He was very trusted, so everything went very well. He could even fix machinary, too. Even if something went wrong with a machine, he could fixed it quickly. As long as he was around, sawmill was operated very well without any waist.

Q: Did you work in a sawmill?

A: Yes, I did. It was in 1927 and 1928.

Q: When did you get marry?

A: In 1929.

Q: How did you get to know your wife?

A: Well, she came from the same village. Her husband died of gun accident. His dog steped on the triger and the gun went off. It hit his chest and he died. I married her later on. It was the time of the Depression, so I worked for a sawmill in the daytime and worked on the farm at night. She had a farm. Before I went to sawmill, I worked on our farm and then also after the sawmill work. We didn't have money to buy milk. A quart of milk cost 8¢, however, we didn't have that money. You see, she was pregrant by the first husband. It was Sadako, the odest sister.

Well, it was very hard because even though our sent out our produce, it didn't make any money. The fruit was very cheep at that time. I can't forget this, but we sent out many boxes of pear called Bosk (?), I don't quite remember how many boxes. We got only 4¢ a box at that time. I was payed by the Association. We could only buy a half quart of milk with that money. It was really

difficult. This kind of hardship continued till the begining of the war. You see when we got married, the Depression was laready started. The peak of it was in 1933. I didn't work for the sawmill too long. It paid only 35¢ per hour. It was just too cheep and we couldn't exidt on that. So I went to work for a railroad. The railroad paid more than the sawmill. It also had overtime, too.

The train passes in day time. So we had to fix it in the middle of the night. I worked for it for about one year, too. It was during the Depression time. That Depression was terrible time. You can't even talk about it. Even if I got paid by a check, I couldn't cash it at a bank. Even banks went bankrupt. By 1933, we had 3 children. They were all toshigo (children born within one year of distance). So this added to our hardship. Even if I farmed, there was no placed to borrow money.

My wife's father-in-law, her former husband's father, was with us, too. You see, so I became <u>yoshi</u> (a man adopting wife's name). That Depression was very hard time. Then the President Roosevelt began the new program so the things began to get bettwe. By the time things got well, we had to enter the war time.

Q: What kind of things did you eat during the Depression?

A: Well, we did eat rice. We try to raise as much vegitable as we could. We also raised pigs, rabbits and chicken. So we didn't have that much trouble with food. However, we didn't have any cash, so we couldn't buy anything. We grew potetos and carots a lot. We also had horses and goats, too. We ate lots of rabbits. We ate them all the time. We had a large house, and raised rabbits in there. They moltiply a lot in a very short time. It was a gray kind which grew big. They usually raised those for meat. We sure ate lots of rabbits.

We had a tall fense around the field so we had kept chickens loose in it. So we didn't have to feed them very much. I did most of the work outside with a horse.

Q: Your hardship began after you got married.

A: Yes, it did. This continued till the war time.

Q: How was your economic condition after 1933?

A: Well, it didn't change too much. It began to get better in 1938 and 1939. But it was not very good for a long time.

Q: What did you do right before the war?

A: I was farming then. I grew pears and apples. By that

time I couldn't grow strowberries on the land, because trees had grown too big. So the only thing I had was fruits. When I had time, I worked at a sawmill or rairoad.

I worked very hard. But the forman was a Japanese, so when I went there asking for a job, they gave it to me. The only thing I did was to work and feed our kids.

My wife died when the smallest one was 4 years old. It was in 1944, during the war. I raised all my children by myself for the next 20 years.

Q: When the war began, Pearl Habor was bombed. How did you feel about that?

A: On that day... well, one of my relatives who lived in Portland, had a fish market called "Star". I was taking order for him the in village. I took a lot of orders that day. However, I had a call(from my wife). She told me that Japan attacked Pearl Habor, so I should come home right away. I thought it was odd. It's unthinkable that Japan would war against America. But because she said so on the phone, so I came home.

I had a radio. So I turned it on. Well, the radio was saying that the war had started. I still couldn't believe it. So in the evening I put on a short wave radio. Well,

I heard the same news by Japanese. I thought they did a very foolish thing. We couldn't do a thing about it, but I thought something would work out. I was the next day or the day after, when a county shelif came to see us and told us that we were not to move more than 5 miles away from our house. He said that if we needed any help, we could contact him.

Then I felt that it was the truth. It couldn't be helped. We wanted to hear some kind of assurance, because we felt very insecure. The nespapers came out every week, so we could read about the news of the war.

There was about 12 miles to the town from our house. So we couldn't go shoping. We had to buy everything at the local grocery store. In the mean while Dewitt, who was the commander of Pacific Coast told those of us who lived within 200 miles from the coast to move out. Well, we had the land and we didn't know what to do with our property. The government told us what to do with it.

They told us to leave it (the land) or sell it. We had it till the middle of May. We had only 4 months to do this. Whether we leased it or sold it, the government had to approve it, so that it wouldn't be inequitable. So, I leased it. I was to get it back if I came back before March 15th. We were to receive 40% of the income from the land.

I was to pay tax on the land from that 40%. I had 18 acres. Our fruits were to be taken to the Association. So the Association took care of it, and also that 40% for us. This was our contract, so that it didn't put any strain on any one. The government was watching it for us, so... There were those who sold it very cheep and lost out. However, by and large there was not much persecution.

But, whatever I had, the household things, were stolen from us. Everything was stolen from us. Our house was locked up. But they say that they let the farm workers use our house. So everything was stolen from us, even our beds. Those important things were sent to us at the camp.

We came back here in March of 1945, before the end of the war. By that time relocation centers were to be closed. The officials at the camp called us and asked us if we would like to move to the East. They said that there was 180 acres of apple ranch in near Chicago. They wanted me to take care of that ranch. However, I told them that I had my own ranch, so I wanted to go back to California. They really insisted that they wanted me to work there. I could request any conditions I wanted. But I also insisted that I should come back to California.

I came back 13th or 14th of March and had the man give my ranch back. I was a big job. It was still during the war, so there weren't very many workers. My orchard was not

cared for at all. Some of the white neighbors said that the man sold the fertilizer out instead of giving it to the trees. He also didn't prune it, so the branches got long and came down to the ground. They could pick apples sitting down. Weeds were all growing wild. It's not good for the tree at all. Well, we couldn't help it, because he said that there was no one to hire to do the job. It wasn't only our orchard. It was the same with everyone of the orchards here. They just wanted to make as much money as they could without working too hard. As for as they were concerned, we might come back and take the orchard away at any time, so they didn't want to take care of it.

At that timeprice of fruit was really good on the account of the war. Laber was very cheep. They payed $4.00 per box, so it was a very good price. They would buy any kind of fruits. So the economy improved quite a bit for us. There were about 3 or 4 people came back with me at Hood River.

When we came back, there were those stores which would not do any busin ess with us. However, there were two to three stores who were really good. They told us to come to them it we had any trouble. They'll fix it for us. There was a minister by the name of Rev. Bogoin (?). He was a man who had come from the East. He didn't know any Japanese before. At that time American Legion Post 22 was discriminating against Japanese very severely. They put one page

add on the newspaper petitioning government that Japanese should not be allow to come back to the West Coast. There was a list of 11 veterans of Foreign War in front of the court house. They pulled that name out, too. Well, this Rev. Bogoin got mad. He didn't know any Japanese, but he went around making sp-eches on behalf of Japanese.

At that time many grocery stores had signs, "No Japs". Rev. Bogoin went into those stores and tolked to them. Once he bought egges from a store which had that sign. Then he asked about that sign. Finally he said, "I don't like this kind of store!" and he threw down the egges on the floor and went out.

He was a minster and also a school bus driver. During the daytime he had free time. So he came around Japanese families and asked if they needed anything. If they needed anything, then he would go out and bought them and brought them to the families. He was a real fine person whom I was really impressed.

Soon many Japanese families came back to Hood River. Later on he receive metal or certificate of appreciation. He had to go to New York at_____ hotel to receive it. He and his wife needed fare, so Japanese community raised money for them. On the way home, they went around the south. Well, in the south blacks were not treated qeually. When he came back he was so angry that he talked about it

with real loud voice. Before the war, he never met Japanese. He was a real human being with courage. If he thought it was right, he would push it as far as he could.

When he died, his funeral was held at Portland. His will said that all the pallbearers were to be Japanese. He even mentioned by names. He was really different. He was a good man. Because of him other things began to get better. I'm sure he talked about (not discriminating Japanese) in his services, too. He was a methodist minister. His church was a small church. In Hood River other denominations had more members. But he didn't have to worry about his livelyhood because he was driving a school bus.

There was another minsiter by the name of Dr. Carlance(?). He was born in England and a naturalized citizen. He was a missionary in Tsuyama, Japan for about 11 years. He was a strong evangelist. He spoke Japanese very well. When they decided to gibe citizenship to Japanese, he volunteered to teach a class in Japanese. So we learned it from him. We learned American Conctitution. About 39 Issei received citizenship at that time. We owe it to Dr. Carlance.

He was also a very interesting man. At that time his church was in the Eastern Oregon. However, when he died, he wanted to have his funeral at Hood River where there were

many Japanese people. He is burried at the Pine Grove Burial sight. He was in Japan so he knew Japanese very well.

When we came back to Hood River, we worked from the next day. There was no one living in my house then. We provided our home for those people who were coming back from the camp and had no place to go. My home was an old and shaky house, however, it was a large house. So we had my wife's in-law's relative who was a widow and with children. They were in Wyoming, so we called them back and they lived with us. There was another family. Well, they were our neighbor. The camp was closing, but they did not have any place to go. It was Oct. 15, or so. I told them if they didn't have any place to go, they should come over and stay with us. So at one time 15 people lived in our house.

Every morning we made a lot of breakfast. I used to make a large stuck of pancake, a feet high. They used to eat that every day. It was a large household. At that time I was young, too, so I could work very hard to feed them. However, I can't do that now. I was 43 then.

Q: I would like to ask you about the camp. Where were you?

A: The Assembly Center was at Portland. Most of the people in Hood River went to Pine Dale. However, my wife was very ill, and was hospitalized, so we went to Portland. We left

Portland in August and came to Tule Lake. We were in the Block 71. Then the next year in August people were segregated and we were sent to Idaho---Minedoca. So we stayed there till we came back.

Q: How did you feel when you entered the Assembly Center?

A: Well, I had 7 children with me. My wife was still at the hospital. It was really painful. The smallest one had a whooping cough. It was really bad at that time. As you know the housing facilities at the Assembly Center was like boxes and there was an opening at the top of the wall dividing one family to the other. So when the child coughed and started to cry I really worried about our neighbor. During that time I have very little rest.

There was a woman in our neighborhood who took care of my children very well. She would take my young ones to give them baths. While we were in the Assembly Center, a doctor gave him/her a shot, so he/she got well soon after that. But I would say it was one of the most difficult time of my life. I just couldn't let him/her cry, because if I let him/her cry, the entire neighborhood would be bothered by it.

When we came to Tule Lake he/she came down with measles. Well, I had to face it one after another. My wife had

cancer. We didn't know that until we came to Tule Lake. You know a woman doctor by the name of Dr. Togasaki? She was the one who found it out. So we sent her to a hospital in Portland. She received X-ray treatment. She got well for a little while. We moved to Idaho and her condition got really bad. They said there was a doctor by the name of Dr. Matsumoto who was a real good doctor in Salt Lake City. She stayed there in Salt Lake City for 3 weeks. However, he said that he couldn't do anything about it, so we should take her back to the Camp.

My wife's older sister had a car, so she came to pick us up. She sent us back to the camp. She died 3 days after we came back. It was Nov. 8, 1944. I didn't know what to do. I had small children, I also had an old person with me. The camp was closing. I just didn't know what to do.

A friend of mine from Hood River told me to go back to our own house in Hood River. As long as we get there, things would work out somehow. So I recovered my spirit a little bit. I went to the office to take that procesure and came back.

For a while, I couldn't pick up my spirit, but I couldn't abandon myself. So I was sourt of left in the air. I just lived one day at a time. We were detained inside of the fense, and were watched all the time, so there

no need for me to abandon myself. I just let things happen as they happened. The fense was all over the place. We were constantly aware of it all the time.

Q: What was your hobbies?

A: I didn't have any. I jsut didn't have any time for that. You see, the oldest one was about 13 or 14, when we came back, so they were quite young then.

Q: It's a wonder that you were able to raise them.

A: Well, they grew up by themselves. That's what I think. I'm very thankful that every one of them grew up straight. Well, I began to fish after we came back. There are two rivers by us and there were lot of fish in them.

It was very difficult when children were small. However, they helped each other, so it was a great help to me. Older one took care of younger ones. I didn't know anything about schooling. They just took care of themselves and graduated from schools. When one graduated and got a job she sent younger ones to school. It was beyond my power.

Other people took easy when they went to camp. But it wasn't for me. I had to work in the kitchen in Tule Lake. I had small children and also sick wife, so I wanted to feed something nice to them. So I worked in the kitchen.

When I went to Idaho, I went outside to work. I used roadblader, the thing to fix road, in the camp. I also worked to make irrigation for local farmers. We cleaned sagebush with the roadblader, and collected them and burned them. The director of the camp owned a airplain. So we made a runway for it. You just had to push down the sagebrush and leveled the ground. That's all we had to do to make a runway.

Q: Was it at Tule Lake that you were to answer loyalty questions?

A: Yes, yes. It was the question No. 28 and 29.

Q: How did you answer that?

A: There were some who answered no-no. There were a quite few of them in fact. At that time I couldn't bring myself to answer no-no. Especially when I thought about my children. Those people who were single or didn't have children didn't matter whether or not they went back to Japan. However, I couldn't do that. I had a large household and wife. I just had to be yes-yes. Otherwise, I might have to face more hardship. That's why I said yes-yes and went to Minidoca.

Even though I was an enemy alien, I was registered in the Army. In the begining, I was C4. However, they changed it to F1. In any case C4 was a reserve. Then I was

classified as an enemy alien.

I didn't have any trouble with the government. In fact I was surprised by the good treatment I got by them. When I came back to the Hood River, they sent two officials to protect Japanese. They were going around Japanese houses. They (told us) about atmosphere (of anti-Japanese feeling) in the town. They came to our meetings every time. They must be studying our feelings, too. They did good job of protecting us. So even though Japanese came back, there was not much trouble.

The only thing I remember was that there were couple of gorotsuki (gangs) and if a store had sold something to Japanese, they would go in there and threaten them. So that's why there were those stores who didn't want to sell anything to Japanese. Finally they didn't bother them anymore. Besides, theoe two were bothering their business, so they were disliked by everyone. Once I went into the store for a loaf of bread. However, the owner said that he wanted to sell it to me, but because of those gorotsuki he couldn't sell it to me.

When I left Minidoca, I bought an old truck. That's how I brought my luggage. I decided to buy somethings. If they didn't sell them to me in the town of Hood River, then

I would go to the next town called Dedance, which was about 24 miles from Hood River. I went there many times. So when I came back, I dropped in several places to show thateven though I was a Japanese, I could buy things as much as I wanted to.

They didn't sell me gasoline. Well, for this, Rev. Borgoin had to fuy for us. He took our truck and barrels and brought galoline as much as we wanted. We owe a great deal to him.

In any case, the camp life was a terrible life. It was a life without hope. It was the worse thing. Well, everyone knew that stealing was no good, but many people went to steal something from the field, or stole chicken and others. I was working on the field, making roads. So when I saw a ripe cucumbers, I would picked them and brought them back. I gave them to my neighbors. Well, of course they were really happy to receive them. I did this with watermelon and other melons, too. I could get it for them before everyone could eat them.

In Idaho, I used to steal gasoline. Gas was on ration so we couldn't buy it outside. There were some who had car in the camp. He would take us to fishing on Sunday to the place where it was called Shoshon. However, he

he couldn't buy enough gas, so I would siphone off some from the trucks and heavy equipment. I would hide it somewhere outside of the fense. So when we went to fishing, we could use it.

We had lots of time, so I took a galon jar and rubber tubing and suck it up, you see. It was sort of fun. Mr. Morimoto was in charge of gasoline stand in the camp. He was good at stealing from the gasoline stand. You see, he had to account for every galon of gas he had. If he didn't have enough money to account for it, he would say it was because of the leakage. He had a half galon can sitting right under the hose and he collected that, too. We could collect as much as 5 galons.

In Shoshon, we caught trout. They were big and good eating. They were 16 to 18 in. Once my pole was drown into the water. We went after it quickly. We went to fish there quite often. It was really fun.

Q: You were widower for a long time, weren't you? Didn't you want to get married again?

A: No, I didn't think about it at all. I couldn't get married until children got married. This idea (of getting married) never entered my mind. As soon as the oldest

one graduated, she became a teacher at Glandale in Oregon. So I was glad that even Japanese can get a job. I felt very secure then.

Q: When did you get married the second time?

A: It was in 1966. When I visited Japan, she was divorced and living by herself. I asked her if she wanted to come to America. She also has a daughter in Portland. She has a grand child, too. Just one now. She was two boys in Japan.

Q: Are you glad that you came to America?

A: Well, I wouldn't know how to survive in Japan. I don't know anything about it. Once you breathed American air, you can't breath Japanese air. Once in a while I visit Japan, but I don't feel like living there.

Q: Do you your children to know that they are Japanese?

A: Yes, that's why I sent them to Japanese school before the war. You must not forget that you are Japanese. Even though You might marry a Caucasion or others, you can not forget that you are indeed Japanese. I was a treasurer for a Japanese school for a long time.

Q: What kind of things would you like to teach Sansei?

A: Well, I never thought a bout it. Nisei and Sansei received American education. I am a man of Meiji era

and I would think it would be very difficult to insist on my way of doing things. It wouldn't work. Even though I did think about it, I never said it. I might have hinted by way of old tales, but I never told them what I wanted them to do directly. The entire environment is different now. Though there are somethings which I can't even see (cannot accept), but I feel I can't object. I cannot say that to them. It's the same way even if you go to Japan. People who were born in Meiji and Showa cannot take things the same way. We might have very hard head, but there are something which are very hard to accept. I suppose, I must have said something about it to them.

I said this, "You think you have a freedom and live in a democratic society, but they way you understand it is not correct." I did argue with them a lot. However, Japanese society is at the point where mothing can be done about it, so even if I insist on it, they couldn't do anything about it.

If you misunderstand freedom, it would be very terrible. There is nothing worse than this. Japanese education had changed. It's differnt from Meiji education. I can see that they have wrong idea about freedom, but if I say anything about it, it becomes, "oldman of cold water" (Japanese expression, meaning oldman often put damper on things.)

Whenever you have a "right" then there is also a "responsibility". Japanese education had tought it for a long time. We were to know our responsibility before we insist on our right. Older people can see this, but young people cannot see this at all. I said this a lot in Japan.

Q: When you came back from the camp, you were 44 years old. After that things went smoothly, right?

A: Yes, I think so. In any case, I was totally occupied with raising 7 children and helping an old man. In 1960, I became sick with my stomack. I had injured my leg, so my doctor told me to take aspirin. Well, I took a lot of aspirin and hurt my stomack. I got really thin. I could tell that myself.

So I thought I might not last too long, so I decided to visit Japan to visit our parents grave. I asked my older brother to go with me and he did. People in Japan were also worrying about me. I was weighing a little over 110 lb. After I came back, I must relaxed, I began to get well. It was the first time in 33 years that I visited Japan. Without visiting my parents grave, I could not even die peacefully.

Well, my children were getting married and established. Once I went to Japan to take a tour. It was about 1965. At that time I got to meet my present wife. So I went back next year, 1966, to get married.

My fist wife's father died in 1952. He was 90 years old. I I took care of him all the way. We celebrated his 88th year birthday (which is called beiju, meaning rice is matured). He was a very healthy man.

It was the year when the war started, (I don't quite remember), but you see, we raised a pig and it became mad when the old man went to feed it. The pig pushed him down.

It was a very hot summer evening. At that time we also had a goat, which was lost in the mountain. So we brought him home and kept it in our yard. It was when I was going to mountain to get bamboo. He used to follow me everywhere I went. In any case, he also followed the grandpa to the pig pen. When the pig pushed him down, the goat charged at the pig many times and saved the grandpa's life. He was bitten by it quite a bit, so we took him to a doctor and got him a shot. Grandpa said that the way goat charged at him was really fearce.

After we came back from the doctor's office, we got on a trucktor and took a gun to shoot the pig. Because it would be very dengerous. They said that if male pigs were not castrated, they could get mad in hot days. That goat was a really different. We didn't take care of it that well, but it was treated as one of the family members. It was big one because we had her for a long time. It was really big. I forgot how long we had her with us. We sheared her hair in the summer time. It used to stink a lot. We couldn't stand it. Shearing her hair was a big job. We did that for a long time. She was so stinky that sometime we try not to let her in the house. Well, she would go around the house over and over again. I suppose she was very lonesome.

When we pruned pear tree, she used to come alone and ate buds on the branch cleanly. When the war started, we had to give it to a family. There was someboy who asked for our house. So I said, "I'll give you my horse, but I would like you to keep this sheep, too." I told him about that incident and asked him repeatedly that the sheep should be kept with care.

Q: Lots of things happend, didn't they?

A: Yes, lots of things happend in the past 60 years.

Q: Would you do it again if you are to begin from the scratch?

A: No, I wouldn't. It was really difficult. I was very healthy person, so I din't have to worry a bout it. The only time I was hospitalized was when I was operated on my varicose vain, and also my tong. I used to bite on it often and they told me that I should have it operated. I had a tumor developed there. I was also hospitalized because I got a bad cold.

Q: I always hear about your fishing.

A: Oh, yes. In the beging I just couldn't afford the time to become crazy about it. I had to work on my field. My former wife's older sister was really crazy about it. Once I went to visit her in April. She said, "I'm going to Salmon fishing. Would you like to go?" I said, "Well, I just can't afford to become crazy about fishing."

Well, she insisted that I should go, so I went. I don't know whether I was lucky or unlucky. I caught one. Well, that's it. Since then I have been crazy about fishing. I used to go to Coose Bay for striper bass fishing before new year. It was really fun. In April you could go Salmon fishing in Colombia River. In the begining Salmon fishing wasn't that fun. It's really hard, you know. But once you catch one, you can feed many people with it and people are really happy to get a pice of it, so

I began to get interested in it. Finally, I'm really crazy about it.

It's really cold you know to go fishing around March and April. It's really cold by the rain. Sometimes it's raining and my hand's are numb. But now I don't care. In the begining I thought it was hard, but not now.

It's also interesting to find out how to catch them in a better way. This is interesting,equipment, whether, and how not to let go once you hook into one. Now we can catch a lot of shad. There is a cirtain depth that you must consider when you go for shad. You cann't drag on the bottom or the surface.

Once I figured out how to find the depth where fish were swiming, by way of weight. Accordingly I also must decide the location of hook on the string. I separate each hook by red beeds. Well, now everybody is immitating my method. I see a lot of vietnamese there, too. They like to eat fish a lot.

Q: Thank you very much for taking time to talk to me.

A: No, not at all. I've got a lot of time. Today I mowed lawn for Steven. I used to make a pig tale for my little

girls when they went to school. On the birthday of my children I used to bake big cake and let them take it to the classes. However, I forgot how to do that now.

Q: Where did you learn hwo to speak English?

A: Well, I did try to go to school when I came here first. However, I had to work at railroad , so I had to quit. When I came back, my friend was still gong to school, but I just couldn't continue. If I had continued my schooling, I didn't have to worry about my English. I'm not really good at it. I can carry out dily conversation, but when it comes to a contract or medical useage, I give up very quickly. I just couldn't master it for the past 60 years.

I feel very lucky because I haven't lost any of my children yet. Every one is established and healthy. They all grew up by themselves. My life is not over yet. I'll live for a while. I have only 3 grandchildren. Steven is the oldest. The youngest one, she was only 4 years old when her mother died, have 2 children. They are all boys.

One of my boy is married to a white woman who has her own children. When I went to visit them, they called me "grandpa". I was really happy to hear that. When I

went to visit them last time, I knocked on the door. One of the children open the door and found out that I was standing there. Then he yelled, "grandpa!" They are children between a Filipino and a white. They do look a little more white than Asian.

I would like you to come to visit us. Our house is an old one, but it's the one we built. Our house was burnd down in 1950. So I had to build it with the aid of my children. I still have a picture which shows Sadako (Joyce) laying floor. I would like you to come and visit us. It's about 30 mi to Mt. Hood. Mt. Hood always has snow cap. You see we always have lots of people around us. We need only 2 - 3 sacks of rise (50lb each) a year. But we always buy a bout 8 sacks of rice to feed visitors. As soon as new rice come out, we buy 8 sacks. All of our friends who come to visit us are rice eaters.

We also invite Japanese students who came to study agriculture around here. When they come, we make sushi and other Japanese food to treat them. We make sukiyaki, bamboo shoot when in season, Salmon teriyaki when I can catch it.

I have to go back on Sunday (the day after tomorrow) otherwise my strowberries will overripe. I have lot of local costomers who come to buy it from my. They always phone us fro orders. We get all kinds of orders and I

expect people are calling us now. So when we get enough of it then we call them to come and pick them up. Our telephone is going to be very busy. Somebody has to be at the house to take these orders. Even though we have only 3 acres, we can produce quite a bit of strowberries.

This year we didn't have too much sunshine, so it's not as sweet as other years. Ours is called Hood and is a very sweet strowberries. It doesn't have too much crop, so not very many people raise it. We have a lot of customers who want Hood Strowberries, so we make especially for them. We have been rasing Hood for a long time. Once you tasted Hood, you can't eat others, especially the ones from California. Once we sent it to a supermarket. It said, "Local Strowberries." Well, people don't know this, so they didn't buy it.

Once a supermarket refused to sell it for us because once they sell Hood, they wouldn't be able to sell others. There is a local doctor who buys 10 crates from us, because he freezes it and eat it all year around. You can freeze it and eat it or make jam. It's a real good strowberries. However, it gets disease very easily. So it is very hard to raise it. There is a man who has a fruit stand nearby. We-l, he found out that I grew Hood strowberries,

so he has been coming over every morning and takes as much strowberries as I can sell him. He says he can sell whatever amount he gets. What he takes are sold within one hour or so.

If you grow "northwest" you get a lot of fruit. But it is really sour. So even if you make jam, you need lot of suger.

Q: Thank you very much for your time.

A: Not at all. If you come to Oregon, please drop in.

They started their business right away. A man owned a nursery business. His place was distroyed completely. The dammage was so severe that a man from Relocation Authority came to see the place. However, he put into shape soon. They sold their place later on. They cut trees and gave them to our church.

When they paid reperation money, because he had brought the business right back up, they paid him more than the amount they were dammaged. This they did because he had very firm faith.

Q: Thank you very much. I could talk to you forever.